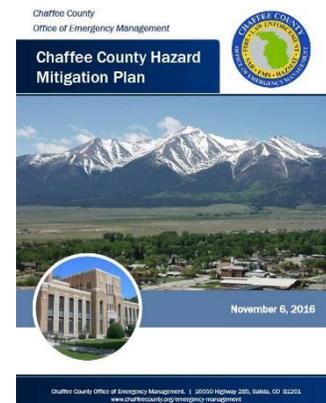


Chaffee County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2021

Project Backgrounder

Chaffee County in collaboration with City of Salida, Town of Buena Vista, and Town of Poncha Springs are updating their Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan develops community mitigation strategies, to work towards reducing the risks posed by hazards. The plan must be updated and approved by FEMA every five years to keep it current and to maintain eligibility for mitigation grant assistance. The plan is currently being updated under the guidance of a multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee



What is hazard mitigation?

The term "Hazard Mitigation" describes actions that can help reduce or eliminate long-term risks caused by hazards, such as floods, wildfires, tornadoes, and earthquakes. Hazard mitigation is best accomplished when based on a comprehensive, long-term plan developed before a disaster strikes.

As the costs of disaster and hazard impacts continue to rise, governments and citizens must find ways to reduce hazard risks to our communities. Oftentimes after disasters, repairs and reconstruction are often completed in such a way as to simply restore damaged property to pre-disaster conditions. These efforts may "get things back to normal," but the replication of pre-disaster conditions often results in a repetitive cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage.

Hazard mitigation breaks this repetitive cycle by producing less vulnerable conditions through pre- and post- disaster actions, projects, and resilient reconstruction. The implementation of such hazard mitigation actions now by local governments means building stronger, safer, and smarter communities that will be able to reduce future injuries and damages.



Project Benefits

Mitigation is an investment in a community's future safety, sustainability, and resiliency. Recent cost-benefit studies have proven mitigation to be cost effective for communities, with mitigation projects returning \$6 for every \$1 spent. Mitigation planning helps communities take action now, before a disaster, to reduce impacts when a disaster occurs.

Hazard mitigation planning helps residents, business owners, elected officials, and municipal departments think through how to plan, design, build, and establish partnerships for risk reduction. Consider the critical importance of hazard mitigation to:

- Protect public safety and prevent loss of life and injury.
- Reduce harm to existing and future development.
- Maintain community continuity and strengthen the social connections that are essential for recovery.
- Prevent damage to your community's unique economic, cultural, and environmental assets.
- Minimize operational downtime and accelerate recovery of government and business after disasters.
- Reduce the costs of disaster response and recovery and the exposure to risk for first responders.
- Help accomplish other community objectives, such as capital improvements, infrastructure protection, open space preservation, and economic resiliency.



Additionally, the County and their municipalities will benefit from this project by:

- Ensuring eligibility for all sources of hazard mitigation funds made available through FEMA.
- Increasing public awareness and understanding of vulnerabilities as well as support for specific actions to reduce losses from future disasters.
- Ensuring community policies, programs, and goals are compatible with reducing vulnerability to all hazards and identifying those that are incompatible.
- Building partnerships with diverse stakeholders, increasing opportunities to leverage data and resources in reducing workloads, as well as achieving shared community objectives.
- Expanding the understanding of potential risk reduction measures to include: local plans and regulations; structure and infrastructure projects; natural systems protection; education and awareness programs; and other tools.
- Informing the development, prioritization, and implementation of mitigation projects. Benefits accrue over the life of these projects as losses are avoided from each subsequent hazard event.

The Plan Update Process

The County is following a 4 phase/9 step process to update the plan over the first quarter of 2021, following FEMA guidance with consultant assistance.

How to Get Involved:

Residents, organizations, interested stakeholders and businesses are encouraged to contribute to the planning process. One way is to take a short public survey designed to gather input on hazards and their mitigation.

Take the Public Survey!
 Open until February 8th
<https://bit.ly/ChaffeeHMPSurvey>



The updated plan is anticipated to be ready for public review and comment in the spring of 2021.

For more information please contact:

Jeff Brislawn, Project Manager Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc Planning consultant	Rich Atkins, Emergency Manager Chaffee County Office of Emergency Management
Phone: (303) 742-5315	Phone: (719) 207-2730
Email: jeff.brislawn@woodplc.com	Email: chaffeeoem@gmail.com

